50. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 42, wherein the second communication standard is one of a RS-232C standard, a RS-422 standard, and a USB standard.

51. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 48, wherein the second communication standard is one of a RS-232C standard, a RS-422 standard, and a USB standard.

52. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 42, further comprising the steps of:

setting the first communication interface in an active state if the second communication interface in an active state is changed to a disconnected state, and

setting the second communication interface in an active state if the first communication interface in an active state is changed to a disconnected state.

53. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 52, wherein the first communication standard is an IEEE 1394 standard, and wherein the second communication standard is one of a RS-232C standard, a RS-422 standard, and a USB standard.

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated March 13, 2002. Claims 28, 32-35, 42, and 46-57 are presented for examination, with Claims 28, 32-35, 42- and 46-53 having been amended to define more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention. Claims 28 and 42 are in independent form. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Claims 28, 32-35, 42, and 46-57 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. Applicants have carefully reviewed and amended those claims, as deemed necessary, to ensure that they conform fully to the requirements of the first paragraph of § 112, with special attention to the points raised in section 3 of the Office Action. In particular, the phrase "communication unit" has been amended to --communication interface--, and the phrase "communication system" has been amended to --communication standard--. Applicants submit that Claims 28, 32-35, 42, and 46-57 are sufficiently described in the specification in such a way as to enable one of ordinary skill in the relevant art to practice the claimed invention. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejected Claims 28, 32, 35, 42, 46-48, 51, and 53 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,167,061 (Nakatsugawa) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,208,266 (Lyons et al.). Claims 33, 34, 49, 50, and 54-57 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakatsugawa in view of Lyons et al., and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,249,241 (Jordan et al.).[1] Applicants submit that independent Claims 28 and 42, together with the claims dependent thereon, are patentably distinct from the cited prior art for at least the following reasons.

The aspect of the present invention set forth in Claim 28 is directed to an imaging apparatus that includes first and second communication interfaces and a control unit. The first communication interface conforms to a first communication standard, and the second communication interface conforms to a second communication standard different from the first

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1/Applicants note that Claim 52 was not rejected based on prior art.

communication standard. The control unit sets the second communication interface in a passive state if the first communication interface is set in an active state, and sets the first communication interface in a passive state if the second communication interface is set in an active state.

Nakatsugawa, as understood by Applicants, relates to a communication system that enables digital data to be communicated at different communication speeds via a common data transfer line. Lyons et al., as understood by Applicants, relates to a remote data acquisition and processing system.

Applicants submit that a combination of Nakatsugawa and Lyons et al., assuming such combination would even be permissible, would fail to teach or suggest an imaging apparatus that includes "a control unit, which sets said second communication interface in a passive state if said first communication interface is set in an active state, and sets said first communication interface in a passive state if said second communication interface is set in an active state," as recited in Claim 28.

The Office Action states that "Nakatsugawa is silent on a control unit setting communication units active /passive modes," and cites the abstract and column 6, lines 32-63 of Lyons et al. as disclosing "a processing system that includes controllers with timing mechanism which initiate/control multiple imaging devices to periodically alternate between active periods and inactive periods (active/passive states)." Applicants respectfully traverse that characterization of Lyons et al., and submit that Lyons et al. teaches a "timing mechanism for causing the controllers and imaging devices to periodically alternate between active periods and inactive ("sleep") periods." (See column 6, lines 32-36.) Lyons et al. further teaches that the controllers and imaging devices ordinarily operate in the sleep mode, and the timing mechanism

periodically generates control signals for causing the controllers to enter the active mode. In turn, the controllers cause the imaging devices to enter the active mode. Thereafter, the controllers and the imaging devices are either commanded to return to the sleep mode or automatically do so. (See column 6, lines 37-51.)

Applicants respectfully submit that both Nakatsugawa and Lyons et al. fail to disclose or suggest a control unit that sets one communication interface in a passive state if another communication interface is set in an active state, as claimed in Claim 28. Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claim 28 is patentable over the cited art, and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Independent Claim 42 is a method claim corresponding to Claim 28, and is believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons as discussed above.

The other rejected claims in this application depend from one or the other of the independent claims discussed above and, therefore, are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual reconsideration of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

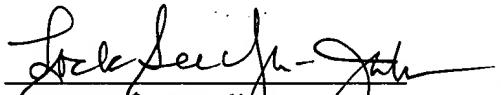
This Amendment After Final Action is believed clearly to place this application in condition for allowance and, therefore, its entry is believed proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment, as an earnest effort to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe that issues remain outstanding, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact Applicants' undersigned attorney in an effort to resolve such issues and advance the case to issue.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

No petition to extend the time for response to the Office Action is deemed necessary for the present Amendment. If, however, such a petition is required to make this Amendment timely filed, then this paper should be considered such a petition and the Commissioner is authorized to charge the requisite fee to Deposit Account 06-1205.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE TO CLAIMS

28. (Thrice Amended) An imaging apparatus comprising:

a) a first communication [unit] interface, which conforms to a first communication [system] standard;

b) a second communication [unit] interface, which conforms to a second communication [system] standard different from the first communication [system] standard; and

c) a control unit, which sets said second communication [unit] interface in a passive state if said first communication [unit] interface is set in an active state, and sets said first communication [unit] interface in a passive state if said second communication [unit] interface is set in an active state.

32. (Thrice Amended) An apparatus according to claim 28, wherein [said] the first communication [unit conforms to] standard is an IEEE 1394 standard.

33. (Thrice Amended) An apparatus according to claim [32] 28, wherein said [second communication unit conforms to a RS-232C standard] imaging apparatus is a video camera.

34. (Thrice Amended) An apparatus according to claim [32] 28, wherein [said] the second communication [unit conforms to] standard is one of a RS-232C standard, a RS-422

standard, and a USB standard.

35. (Thrice Amended) An apparatus according to claim 32, wherein [said] the second communication [unit conforms to] standard is one of a RS-232C standard, a RS-422 standard, and a USB standard.

42. (Thrice Amended) A method of controlling an imaging apparatus that includes a first communication [unit] interface, which conforms to a first communication [system] standard, and a second communication [unit] interface, which conforms to a second communication [system] standard different from the first communication [system] standard, comprising the steps of:

setting the second communication [unit] interface in a passive state if the first communication [unit] interface is set in an active state; and

setting the first communication [unit] interface in a passive state if the second communication unit is set in an active state.

46. (Twice Amended) An apparatus according to claim 28, wherein said control unit sets said first communication [unit] interface in an active state if said second communication [unit] interface in an active state is [set in] changed to a disconnected state, and sets said second communication [unit] interface in an active state if said first communication [unit] interface in an active state is [set in] changed to a disconnected state.

47. (Twice Amended) An apparatus according to claim 46, wherein [said] the first communication [unit conforms to] standard is an IEEE 1394 standard, and wherein [said] the second communication [unit conforms to] standard is one of a RS-232C standard, a RS-422 standard, and a USB standard.

48. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 42, wherein the first communication [unit conforms to] standard is an IEEE1394 standard.

49. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim [48] 42, wherein the [second communication unit conforms to a RS-232C standard] imaging apparatus is a video camera.

50. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim [48] 42, wherein the second communication [unit conforms to] standard is one of a RS-232C standard, a RS-422 standard, and a USB standard.

51. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 48, wherein the second communication [unit conforms to] standard is one of a RS-232C standard, a RS-422 standard, and a USB standard.

52. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 42, further comprising the steps of:

setting the first communication [unit] interface in an active state if the second communication [unit] interface in an active state is [set in] changed to a disconnected state, and

setting the second communication [unit] interface in an active state if the first communication [unit] interface in an active state is [set in] changed to a disconnected state.

53. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim [42] 52, wherein the first communication [unit conforms to] standard is an IEEE 1394 standard, and wherein the second communication [unit conforms to] standard is one of a RS-232C standard, a RS-422 standard, and a USB standard.